

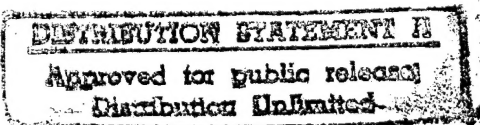
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.

The Unified Command Plan and the Navy's
Organizational Plan:
Is it Time for the Navy to Change?

by
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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of Defense.



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6 March 1996

Paper directed by Captain D. Watson
Chairman, Joint Military Operations Department

19960501 293

Faculty Advisor

Date

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 1

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification This Page

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. Report Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED			
2. Security Classification Authority:			
3. Declassification/Downgrading Schedule:			
4. Distribution/Availability of Report: DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.			
5. Name of Performing Organization: JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
6. Office Symbol: C		7. Address: NAVAL WAR COLLEGE 686 CUSHING ROAD NEWPORT, RI 02841-1207	
8. Title (Include Security Classification): The Unified Command Plan and the Navy's Organizational Plan: Is it Time for the Navy to Change? (U)			
9. Personal Authors: LCDR James M. Hudson Jr., USA			
10. Type of Report: FINAL		11. Date of Report: 6 March 1996	
12. Page Count: 29			
13. Supplementary Notation: A paper submitted to the Faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.			
14. Ten key words that relate to your paper: Unified Command Plan, Navy Organization, UCP, CINCLANTFLT, CINCPACFLT, USACOM, Unified CINC,			
15. Abstract: The Unified Command Plan (UCP) has undergone an evolutionary process since its creation in 1947. The Navy's organizational plan has not followed that same evolutionary process. The Navy's lack of change is directly impacting the new initiatives concerned with CONUS based joint training under USACOM. The importance of CONUS based joint training is greatly increasing due to the drawdown of US military forces. This drawdown has seen the majority of forces redeploy to CONUS bases from their forward overseas bases. This means the CONUS based forces must be ready to deploy and fight in a joint environment with very little notice and do not have the opportunity to train in the actual theater of potential operations. This paper compares the current UCP with the Navy's organizational plan and explores potential changes to improve both structures.			
16. Distribution / Availability of Abstract:	Unclassified X	Same As Rpt	DTIC Users
17. Abstract Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED			
18. Name of Responsible Individual: CHAIRMAN, JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
19. Telephone: 841- 666 6461		20. Office Symbol: C	

Security Classification of This Page Unclassified

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Abstract of

THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN AND THE NAVY'S ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN: IS IT TIME FOR THE NAVY TO CHANGE?

The Unified Command Plan (UCP) has undergone an evolutionary process since its inception in 1947. The Navy's organizational plan has not followed that same evolutionary process in the same degree. The Navy's lack of change is impacting the new initiatives concerned with Continental United States (CONUS) based joint training under US Atlantic Command. The importance of CONUS based joint training is greatly increasing due to the drawdown of US military forces. This drawdown has seen the majority of forces redeploy to CONUS bases from their forward overseas bases. This means the CONUS based forces must be ready to deploy and fight in a joint environment with very little notice and do not have the opportunity to train in the actual theater of operations. This paper compares the current UCP with the Navy's organizational plan and explores potential changes to improve both structures.

"We Military have a tendency to concentrate too exclusively on the needs of our own service. We can't even have the luxury of thinking of ourselves simply as an army, or a navy, or an air force...we can't train as the Army...because we are not going to operate as the Army, but rather as a joint-combined force." Gen (Ret) John Galvin, former SACEUR, Olin Professor of National Security, USMA.¹

INTRODUCTION.

The end of the Cold War signified the start of a significant period of change for the US Armed Services. Forward deployed forces returned to bases in the Continental United States (CONUS). At the same time, the force support infrastructure, including bases and headquarters' staffs, both within CONUS and overseas, was reduced to cut overhead costs for the Department of Defense (DOD). This reflected reduced DOD budgets. Some of the services have responded by restructuring their organizations to reflect the new realities of force employment reflected in the current Unified Command Plan (UCP). The Navy has responded by reorganizing the office of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) along standard joint staff lines. This is not enough.

In the author's opinion, the current organizational plan of the Navy does not effectively support UCP operations, with its regional and functional Commander-in-Chiefs (CINCs) structure.² The Navy's plan also serves as

an impediment to effective CONUS based joint training. This is because the Navy's organizational plan has Commander in Chief, Fleet (CINCFLEET) responsibilities which cross regional CINC boundaries. Additionally, CONUS based naval forces are divided between two CINCFLEETs.

The 1993 change to the UCP gave US Atlantic Command (USACOM) joint training and readiness responsibilities over most CONUS based forces. However, Pacific fleet units were not included in this change. This paper compares the current UCP to the Navy's organizational plan and make recommendations to improve the present structures.³

BACKGROUND.

The UCP provides guidance for the command organization of the US military. Hoping to preserve unity of command and effort, the National Command Authorities created permanent, regionally focused CINCs. This action was based on the experiences by the Joint Chiefs during World War II. The UCP has been evolving since its inception because of the rising importance of some regional areas, inter-service rivalries, the increasing incidence of joint operations, and the creation of functional CINCs.⁴

The Navy also came out of World War II with a changed concept of organization. Before the war there were two major commanders, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and the Commander in Chief, US Fleet (COMINCH). CNO was responsible for the administrative functions of the service such as recruiting personnel, training, and maintaining a naval intelligence office. COMINCH exercised operational control of the service. This included fleet organization, execution of war plans, and communication of fleet requirements to CNO. These separate offices were combined in 1942 by the President.⁵

The creation of the UCP during the defense reorganization efforts of 1947, placed command responsibilities with regional CINCs, taking that power away from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). At the same time, the Navy divided the oceans between two Commanders in Chief of the Fleet (CINCFLEET), Atlantic and Pacific.⁶ In the event of global war these two CINCFLEETs were to act as the Navy component commanders, exercising operational control of the assigned naval units, for their geographic CINCs.⁷ In peacetime, the two CINCFLEETs ensured the naval forces under their administrative control received regionally focused

training. Historically, most of the CINC boundaries have been on the coasts of the continents to satisfy the desires of the Navy to retain freedom of movement without transferring control.⁸ Although the UCP has undergone significant revisions through 1995, the only major change to the Navy's organizational plan was the elevation of US Naval Forces, Europe (USNAVEUR) to CINCFLETC status.

Prior to the end of the Cold War, the Unified Commanders in Europe and the Pacific possessed sizable force structures stationed in their respective areas. These CINCs could respond to minor crises within their area by using their own forces with only small reinforcements from CONUS based units. CONUS based units were notionally assigned to a particular CINC and could direct their own training based on that CINC's requirements. The collapse of the Communist regimes and the consequent desire to reduce costs led to a meaningful reduction in permanent overseas forces. While overall force size declined, the percentage based in CONUS rose significantly. Now, CONUS based units may be earmarked for several different contingencies, in different theaters, simultaneously. This requirement demands increased flexibility and a much higher level of joint

interoperability, achievable only through CONUS based joint training.

UCP VERSUS NAVAL ORGANIZATION.

This paper will briefly examine the functional CINCs and then concentrate on the regional CINCs. US Strategic Command (STRATCOM) is charged with the strategic nuclear mission. The USAF's Air Combat Command (ACC) and USAF's Space Command both act as the air component commander to STRATCOM for control of land based nuclear missiles, bombers and battle management. Additionally, CINCLANTFLT and CINCPACFLT both act as the Navy component commander for ballistic missile submarines and a strategic communications wing assigned to STRATCOM.⁹ This forces CINCSTRAT to deal with two different, widely separated naval headquarters, even though the assigned Navy assets are based in CONUS when not deployed.

The other three functional CINCs do not share this problem. US Space Command's Navy component commander is the Naval Space Command; US Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) has the Military Sealift Command as its single component commander; and US Special Operations Command has the Naval

Special Warfare Command as its sole Navy component commander for world wide operations.

The organizational shortcomings of Navy support to the geographical CINCs are the most critical elements to examine. Enclosures (1) and (2) for a depict the current geographical CINC boundaries and a simplified version of the current Navy organizational plan.¹⁰ The figures should be referred to when discussing the relationship between the UCP and the Navy's organizational plan.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) provides an interesting case study of how the Navy's organizational plan fails to adequately support the joint warfighter. CENTCOM comprises an area which includes the major oil producing nations of the Middle East, several nations in Africa, the Red Sea, (and over the objections of the Navy¹¹) the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the northwestern Indian Ocean. At CENTCOM's inception, the Navy opposed the elevation of the Rapid Deployment Force from a large, standing Joint Task Force to a unified command. A standing Navy command in the Persian Gulf (Commander, Middle East Force (COMMIDEASTFOR)) was the subject of debate between CENTCOM and US Pacific Command (PACOM). PACOM desired COMMIDEASTFOR to remain

under CINCPACFLT control because PACOM had experience dealing with naval forces and CENTCOM did not. Because COMMIDEASTFOR was positioned in the middle of CENTCOM's AOR, this debate was resolved by CJCS in favor of CENTCOM.¹²

After considering the lessons learned from Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, the Navy recently reestablished the Fifth Fleet to operate the naval forces deployed to the region, replacing COMMIDEASTFOR. This commander will be dual hatted as both the fleet commander and the navy component commander to CENTCOM.¹³ Fifth Fleet is not co-located with CINCCENT but is forward based in the region. This use of a numbered fleet commander as a component commander is consistent with the other services organizational structures for this particular region.

European Command's (EUCOM) naval component commander is CINCUSNAVEUR. EUCOM's area of responsibility (AOR) includes significant territory in Africa and northern Europe, while the navy component commander's AOR is limited to the English Channel, coastal Norway, the Baltic Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea. CINCPACFLT (along with PACOM) controls the oceans off the east coast of Africa. CINCLANTFLT (along with USACOM) is responsible for the

oceans off the west coast of Africa and along northern Europe.¹⁴

The old Maritime Strategy for general war in Europe serves as an excellent example of the problems caused by overlapping command responsibilities. CINCLANTFLT forces (under CINCUSACOM COCOM) were programmed to conduct strikes against the Soviet Union without being under the combat command of CINCEUR, who was charged with the primary mission of defeating Soviet aggression. This was partially mitigated by the fact that CINCUSACOM is fully integrated into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT).¹⁵ A more recent example of the incongruities inherent in this command structure is noncombatant evacuation operations in Africa. These were conducted by CINCUSNAVEUR units, under combat command of CINCEUR, while in USACOM's AOR which caused a brief struggle for control among the affected CINCs and CINCFLETS.¹⁶

In contrast, US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) has a single navy component commander responsible for its entire designated AOR. CINCLANTFLT is designated as the naval component commander and has sole responsibility for the

waters included within SOUTHCOM's AOR. However, CINCLANTFLT is also the navy component commander for CINCUSACOM.

The US Pacific Command (PACOM) and its navy component commander, CINCPACFLT, have the same AOR (although until 1995, CINCPACFLT's AOR used to extend into CENTCOM's area). Under PACOM, Korea is a sub-unified command with an assigned separate navy component commander; Commander, US Naval Forces Korea (COMUSNAVFORKOREA). However, COMUSNAVFORKOREA has no assigned operational forces and is a small planning and coordination staff. Additionally, COMUSNAVFORKOREA is outranked by the Commander of the Seventh Fleet (C7F), normally under operational control of CINCPACFLT.¹⁷ C7F would probably become the actual Navy component commander of this sub-unified command, if conflict was to break out on the Korean peninsula. The Navy is not training and organizing its command structure for how it intends to actually fight in this theater.

JOINT TRAINING.

Prior to 1993, CINCLANTFLT served as the Navy component commander for CINCUSACOM, along with the other duties discussed above. This arrangement worked well, with the notable exception of Africa, because USACOM's and LANTFLT's

boundaries were roughly the same. On 1 October 1993 CINCUSACOM was assigned a new mission--"[to] Provide military forces where needed throughout the world, and ensure those forces are trained as joint units capable of carrying out their assigned tasks."¹⁸ This gave USACOM combatant command over Air Force Air Combat Command (ACC), Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), Marine Corps Forces Atlantic (MARFORLANT), Navy LANTFLT, and the majority of combat forces based in CONUS for the purpose of joint training and Joint Task Force (JTF) integration.¹⁹

All the services had fought this change to the UCP because it appeared to interfere with their responsibilities under Title 10 to organize, train, and equip the separate services.²⁰ The new UCP did not address this fact. However, as discussed above, the increased need for joint training and integration necessitated the assignment of this mission to a unified CINC and the mission fell to USACOM. In effect, USACOM had become the force provider to all other combatant commanders as well as having its own geographical responsibilities.

FORSCOM was created as a specified command for the Army under the 1987 UCP.²¹ FORSCOM was designated a component

commander under USACOM and disestablished as a specified command under the 1993 UCP. The Air Force was reorganizing its forces, minus those dedicated to STRATCOM, under ACC to respond to the new world environment. The Navy, while acknowledging its increased joint role in the new world order, viewed this CONUS based power projection plan as 'business as usual' because they had been conducting operations this way since World War II.²² Therefore, their organizational plan did not change.

The major difference between the services is that ACC and FORSCOM have operational control over most of their respective combat power based in CONUS. Meanwhile, CINCLANTFLT has operational control of under half of the available Navy assets. Naval units based on the west coast, (actually those units based west of the Mississippi river) irrespective of where they are earmarked for deployment, are controlled operationally by CINCPACFLT.²³

DOES THIS MATTER?

When a regional CINC requires additional forces for a mission, the request is passed via the CJCS, for Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) approval. Normally, SECDEF will have CJCS task CINCUSACOM to deploy the required units or

capabilities because CINCUSACOM is viewed as the total force provider. CINCUSACOM will, in turn, task its component commander to alert and deploy the required forces, while coordinating the actual movement with CINCTRANS.²⁴ This system works well with Army and Air Force units but has its limitations regarding naval forces.

A brief example illustrates this point. CINCEUR requested additional Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD) assets, specifically two Navy EA-6Bs to replace a Marine Corps EA-6B squadron deployed for Operation Deny Flight. SECDEF, through CJCS, tasked CINCUSACOM to deploy and redeploy the required assets with the assistance of TRANSCOM. The problem was that Navy EA-6Bs are based on the west coast and are under the operational control of CINCPACFLT. CJCS sent a copy of the tasking message to PACOM for information, not action, and CINCPACFLT (under PACOM) was unaware of the movement requirement.²⁵

The major drawdown of US military forces means that CONUS based forces have to possess the flexibility to deploy anywhere in the world that a crisis might erupt. For example: Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM were in response to a crisis in CENTCOM's area of responsibility.

There were eight Navy aircraft carriers involved in both operations; only three came from the Pacific theater even though (at that time) CINCPACFLT's AOR extended into CENTCOM's AOR.²⁶ In addition, the Ranger Battle Group (which deployed to the Persian Gulf for operations during this period) was trained on the CINCPACFLT operations plan - - not the Iraqi threat and CENTCOM task force integration -- during its pre-deployment work-ups.²⁷ CINCPACFLT provided regionally focused training for its area of responsibility, not training for the actual deployment area!

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

Clarification of the UCP would be helpful with respect to CINCUSACOM's authority. This command should be given: 1) COCOM of all forces based in CONUS and 2) the United States and Mexico as a geographical AOR. CINCUSACOM has military component commanders who are very aware of the service specific training requirements that exist. The 1995 change to the UCP removed most of CINCUSACOM's Caribbean AOR. By giving USACOM command of the unassigned areas of the US and Mexico, it will help clarify the overlapping responsibilities of command and joint training between the Atlantic and Pacific because it will incorporate all Navy

units in CONUS and remove the points of current contention between USACOM and PACOM.

A method to fix EUCOM's problems with its Navy support organization would be to change the UCP. EUCOM's AOR should include the water off its adjacent shore, perhaps up to 200 nautical miles, which would match the effected countries exclusive economic zones.²⁸ Additionally, CINCUSNAVEUR's AOR should be matched to this increased area, subtracting from the area that LANTFLT and USACOM are currently responsible for. This will slightly increase the administrative burden on tactical naval units by increasing the 'chop lines.' However, it will ensure that all actions taken are performed by units under the COCOM of the supported CINC and thereby preserve unity of command.

To address the problems associated with the Navy's organizational plan, consideration should be given to bringing back the old position of COMINCH as a united Naval Continental Command to support USACOM. In fact, one could recommend that the new command be moved to a place like Tinker AFB, in the middle of CONUS or to location in the Gulf of Mexico. This would help remove some of the bureaucratic obstacles to a 'LANT Commander controlling PAC

units.' COMINCH would be used to ensure service specific training, as well as joint training, was being performed and standardized. In simple terms, COMINCH would have COCOM of all Navy forces assigned in CONUS under USACOM, until those units deployed. The formation of COMINCH would give the Navy two options with regards to its organizational plan.

OPTION 1: The positions of CINCPACFLT, CINCLANTFLT, and CINCUSNAVEUR could be disestablished (See Enclosure 3), slicing one level from the operational Navy chain of command. This would greatly ease the functional problems associated with the reporting on, tasking of, and training of Navy units. The current numbered fleet commanders would assume the position of the naval component commander for their respective CINCs, like Commander, Fifth Fleet is for CENTCOM.²⁹

Some required operational support to deployed naval units is provided by the various CINCFLTs headquarters. This support would continue to exist, but now under the direction of the local fleet commander. Logistic support from CONUS would still flow from the various Type Commanders (TYCOMs), who would report operationally to COMINCH, while retaining their administrative chain to the CNO. However,

due to the large amount of naval forces forward deployed at any given time, as well as the perception that the Navy would be outranked by their other service contemporaries, would probably make this idea a non-starter.

OPTION 2: The current organizational plan could remain in effect (see Enclosure 4), however the CONUS training (both joint and service specific) encumbrance that is currently borne by CINCPACFLT and CINCLANTFLT would be removed. That responsibility would be transferred to COMINCH. This would allow the CINCFLETS to concentrate on their primary responsibilities of being the Navy component commanders for their respective warfighting CINCs. In turn, this would cause those staffs to be more responsive and focused on operational events, strengthening the two tiered command system for crisis management.³⁰

In conclusion, all the military forces of the United States have gone through a dramatic period of reshaping and downsizing. What was once a fleet approaching 600 ships is now a fleet of approximately half that size. The question remaining is whether or not the large and multiple staffs that were created to fight the world wide Soviet threat will fit as well in the new joint world? While the office of the CNO has been reorganized to reflect joint structure, the

rest of the Navy is organized as it has existed, virtually unchanged, since the end of World War II. In order to more effectively train the forces of today to fight in the joint world, the training has to start in CONUS and continue throughout a deployment cycle. Reestablishing the position of COMINCH and making that command responsible for Navy training (both joint and service specific) under USACOM, appears to be a method of achieving this goal.

¹ As quoted in Jack A. Klingston, "'Back to the Future'-Restructuring the Warfighting Capability of the United States-Part 2." U.S. Army Aviation Digest, January/February 1995, 52.

² The use of the term CINC and CINCLFLT can be confusing. In this paper CINC will mean the Commander in Chief of the joint areas or joint functions as designated by the UCP. CINCLFLT will refer to the Navy positions of CINCLANTFLT, CINCPACFLT, and CINCUSNAVEUR.

³ Because the basic source documents (UCP, CINCLANTFLT OPORD 2000-92, and CINCPACFLT OPORD 201-92) are classified, some details will be omitted from this discussion. All direct information is taken from unclassified paragraphs.

⁴ Joint History Office, *The History of the Unified Command Plan; 1946 - 1993* (Washington DC: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995), 1-7

⁵ Thomas C. Hone, *Power and Change; The Administrative History of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1946-1986* (Washington DC: Naval Historical Center, 1989), 7

⁶ CINCLANTFLT is located at Norfolk, Virginia; while CINCPACFLT is located at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Both of these Navy headquarters are based in the same area as their primary regional CINC.

⁷ Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1 February 1995), II-6 - II-10 discusses the four basic levels of command authority. They are Combatant Command (COCOM), Operational Control (OPCON), Tactical Control (TACON), and support. In addition, there is Administrative Control (ADCON) which is not command authority. This paper will be dealing with issues concerning COCOM and OPCON of Navy forces.

⁸ Marvin Pokrant, *Considerations Germane to Possible Revisions of the Unified Command Plan*, CQR 95-1. (Alexandria VA: Center for Naval Analysis, January 1995), 30-31

⁹ Joint History Office, 111.

¹⁰ Enclosure 1 is taken from U.S. Department of Defense, *Unified Command Plan*, (Washington DC: Office of the Joint Staff, 1995), 13.

¹¹ Joint History Office, 106 and Armed Forces Staff College, *The Joint Staff Officer's Guide, 1993*, AFSC Pub 1, (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1993) 2-33.

¹² Joint History Office, 77-78.

¹³ John Burlage, "The New 5th Fleet," Navy Times, 1 May 1995, 3

¹⁴ UCP, 1995, 13.

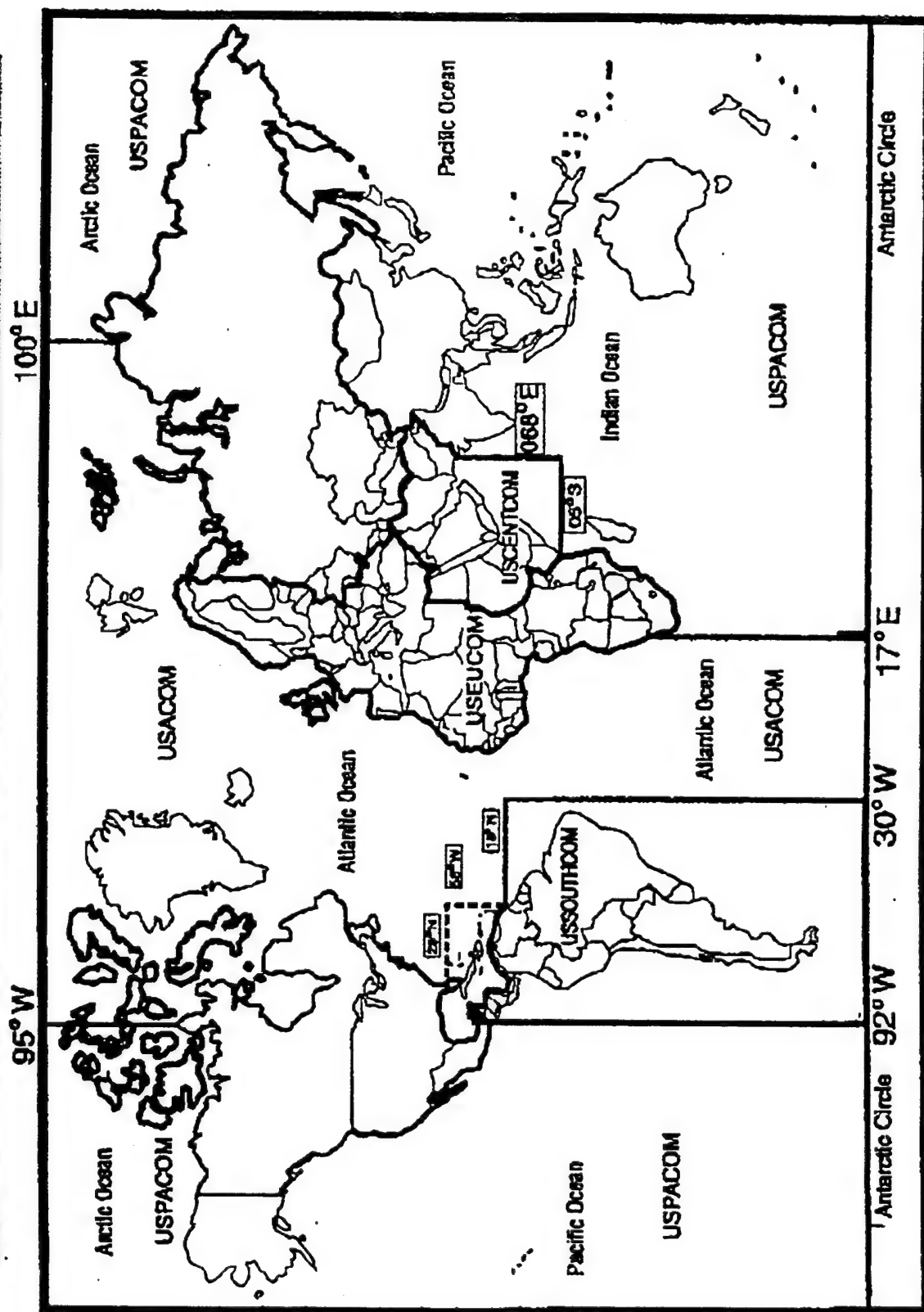
¹⁵ Armed Forces Staff College, 2-24.

¹⁶ Desmond P. Wilson, *Operation Sharp Edge: The Role of Naval Forces in Evacuation Operations*, CIM-168 (Alexandria VA: Center for Naval Analysis, June 1991), 2-3, 9.

¹⁷ Armed Forces Staff College, 2-30.

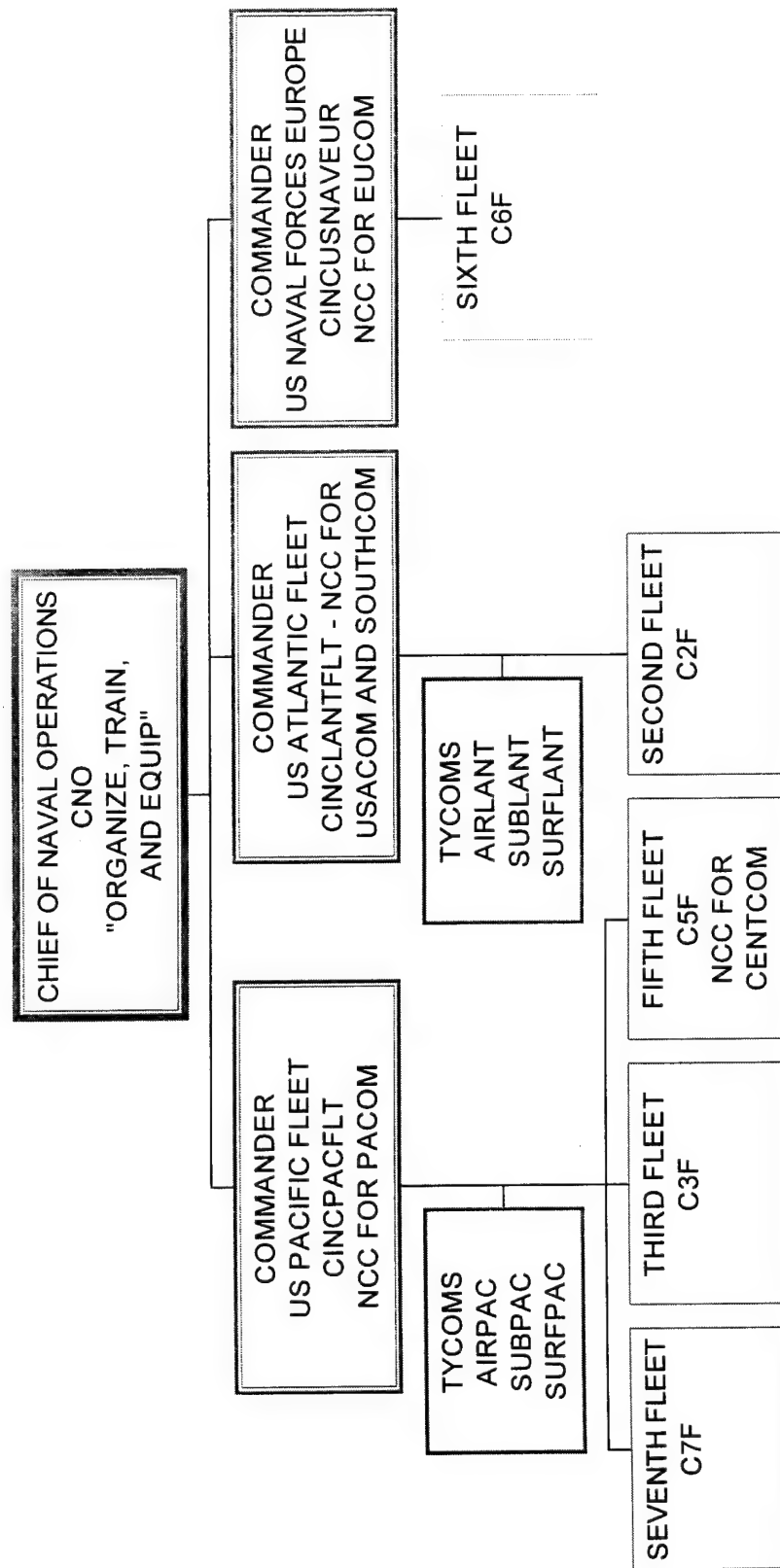
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- ¹⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *Unified Command Plan*, MCM-144-93, (Washington DC: Office of the Joint Staff, 1993), 7.
- ¹⁹ Paul D. Miller, "US Atlantic Command: Focusing on the Future," *Military Review*, September 1994, 6.
- ²⁰ Joint History Office, 112-115.
- ²¹ Joint History Office, 129.
- ²² Department of the Navy, *Forward From the Sea*. (Washington DC: Department of the Navy, 1994), 2-5.
- ²³ There is some discussion at the Naval War College that USACOM was not given control of the PACFLT units due to concern about USACOM's span of control, i.e., all naval units were too much to realistically command. The general feeling is that USACOM will gain control of the PACFLT units, for joint training purposes, in the future as USACOM grows more comfortable with the new mission area. This author agrees with that assessment but feels it should go farther by having USACOM receiving CONUS as a geographical region.
- ²⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 24 February 1995), III-3 - III-4.
- ²⁵ Interview with Cdr. D.B. Woods, EA-6B Readiness Officer, Commander, Tactical Electronic Combat Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Whidbey Island WA: 17 Jan 1996 and on author's personal recollections based on his work at the wing during this evolution. The problems associated with the EA-6Bs highlight the problems at the operational level of command within the Navy since they are based at a single site, on the west coast, and deploy to both fleets. The problems will increase due to the assumption by the Navy of the SEAD mission for the USAF EF-111 aircraft. See "Report of the Secretary of Defense to the President and Congress," (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, February 1995), 208.
- ²⁶ Stan Morse, ed., *Gulf Air War Debrief*, (Westport CT: Airtime Publishing Inc., 1991), 185.
- ²⁷ Personal recollections of the author, who was assigned on the staff of Commander, Carrier Group 7 during this period. Lot's of staff time and the Commander's personal efforts were devoted to getting CINCPACFLT and Commander, Third Fleet to change the focus of the pre-deployment training. The last set of work-ups were finally changed to a Persian Gulf scenario and even then the battle group was tasked to perform a major (Soviet style) anti-air warfare problem as the group deployed.
- ²⁸ Marvin Pokrant, 31-32.
- ²⁹ The sister services could also follow the Navy's approach at streamlining the chain of command. For example US Air Forces Europe and Pacific are two commands which could be disestablished, allowing a numbered Air Force to serve as the air component commander, as is currently done in CENTCOM's AOR.
- ³⁰ Joint Pub 3-0, II-11.

COMMANDERS' AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

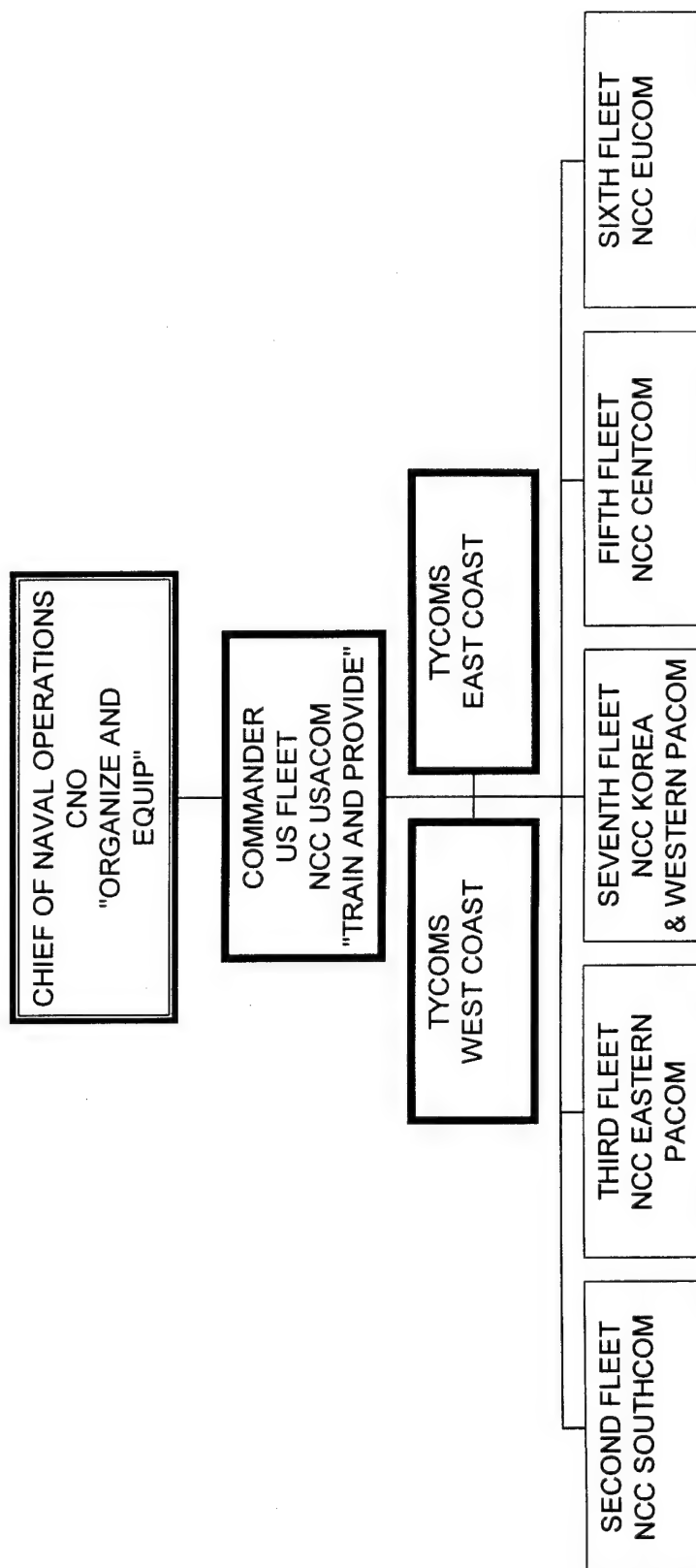


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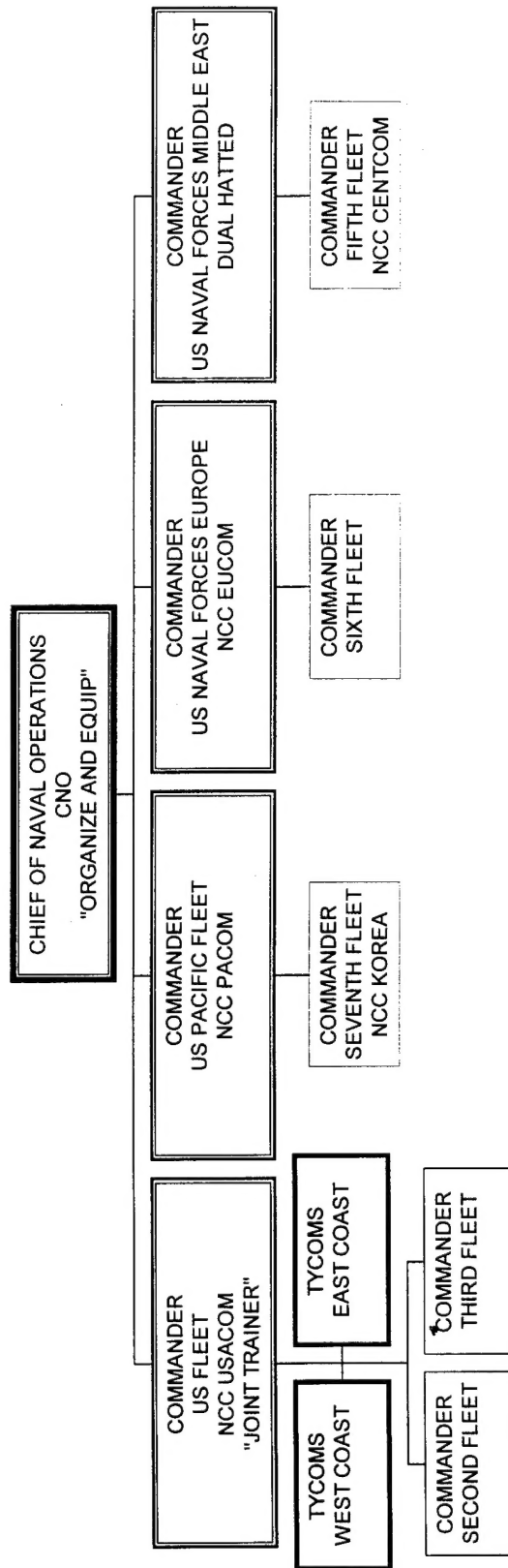
CURRENT NAVY ORGANIZATION CHART (SIMPLIFIED)



OPTION ONE - NAVY REORGANIZATION (SIMPLIFIED)



OPTION TWO - NAVY REORGANIZATION (SIMPLIFIED)



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